CHAPTER 131. INSPECT OPERATOR'S MAINTENANCE FACILITY

SECTION 1. BACKGROUND

1. PROGRAM TRACKING AND REPORTING SUBSYSTEM (PTRS) ACTIVITY CODES.

A. Maintenance: 3619, 3640

B. Avionics: 5619, 5640

3. OBJECTIVE. This chapter provides guidance for inspecting an operator's maintenance facility for regulatory compliance with Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) parts 121 and 135.

5. GENERAL. The maintenance inspection is performed to ensure that adequate housing, equipment, spare parts, technical data, and qualified personnel are being used to satisfactorily complete all maintenance functions.

7. PREPARING FOR THE INSPECTION.

A. Equipment Identification. Inspectors should be aware of the type of aircraft being operated. The operations specifications (OpSpecs) will identify the type of aircraft authorized for use.

B. Facilities. Operators may have numerous maintenance facilities spread out geographically to support their operation. Typically, an operator will have a main maintenance base, submaintenance base(s), and line maintenance facilities. Each maintenance facility must be evaluated for its related work activities and inspected accordingly. The performance of assigned tasks must fall within the limitations and capabilities of the facility. All operator maintenance facilities are required to perform maintenance in accordance with (IAW) the operator's maintenance manuals. The inspector should use these documents to determine what special equipment, housing, and environmental conditions are necessary to perform the work.

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SECTION 2. PROCEDURES

1. PREREQUISITES AND COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS.

A. Prerequisites:

- Knowledge of the regulatory requirements of 14 CFR parts 121 and 135, as applicable
- Successful completion of the Airworthiness Inspector Indoctrination course(s) or equivalent
- Familiarity with the type of operation being inspected

B. Coordination.

(1) This task requires coordination between the assigned principal maintenance and avionics inspectors.

(2) If a line station facility is being inspected by the office with geographic responsibility, coordinate with the certificate-holding district office's (CHDO) principal inspector (PI).

3. REFERENCES, FORMS, AND JOB AIDS.

A. References:

- 14 CFR parts 43, 65, 119, 121, and 135
- SFAR 36
- Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (49 CFR) part 173
- Operator's maintenance manual
- Applicable OpSpecs
- Advisory Circular (AC) 120-78, Acceptance and Use of Electronic Signatures, Electronic Recordkeeping Systems, and Electronic Manuals
- Air Transportation Oversight System (ATOS) Elements: 1.3.3 and 5.1.1

B. Forms. None.

C. Job Aids:

- JTAs: 2.3.5, 2.3.6, 2.3.21, 2.3.86, and 2.3.87

5. PROCEDURES.

A. Review the Operator's Data. Review the following:

(1) The district office files to determine if any chronic or open items exist, status of Enforcement Investigation Reports (EIR), exemptions, previous inspection reports, correspondence, and other documents, to determine if any areas identified require special attention.

(2) The operator's maintenance manuals to determine the level of maintenance accomplished and the complexity of operation at the maintenance facility.

(3) The operator's OpSpecs to determine the maintenance and inspection program content and complexity.

B. Inspect the Maintenance Organization. Ensure the following:

(1) Staffing meets maintenance needs based on the complexity of the operation. One method to determine adequate staffing is to sample the operator's deferred maintenance programs to determine if there are excessive deferral amounts and extensions, which could lead to inadequate staffing. Another method is to review the operator's out-of-hangar performance (Mechanical Interruption Summary) to determine if low staffing results in aircraft maintenance not being accomplished in the time allotted.

(2) Responsibilities are separated between inspection and maintenance sections.

C. Inspect the Inspection Department. Ensure the following:

(1) Designated staffing is adequate for the complexity of the operation.

(2) Delegated staffing (Required Inspection Items) is at a reasonable level.

D. Inspect the Operator's Maintenance Facilities. Using the operator's manual as a reference, inspect the following:

(1) Parts and storage areas, to ensure that:

(a) Parts personnel are adequately trained in the procedures pertaining to their job duties and responsibilities.

(b) Adequate spare parts are available to support the complexity of the operation.

(c) Receiving inspections are accomplished IAW the operator's manual.

(d) Shelf life limits are established for operator-designated items, and that these items are controlled IAW the operator's manual or the manufacturer's recommendations.

(e) Components and hardware are properly identified, protected, stored, and classified as to serviceability.

(f) The operator can provide traceability of hardware, parts, and components subject to installation on type-certificated products.

(g) Segregation of serviceable and unserviceable components and hardware is maintained.

(h) The operator has a hazardous materials program covering areas such as recognition, packing segregation, storage, and shipping. Refer to AC 121-21, Information Guide for Training Programs and Manual Requirements in the Air Transportation of Hazardous Materials, current edition.

(2) Special tools and test equipment, to ensure that:

(a) Serviceability and calibration is accomplished IAW the operator's manual.

(b) All required items are serviceable and within calibration criteria, to include traceability to one of the following:

- The National Institute of Standards and Technology
- Standards established by the item's manufacturer
- If foreign-manufactured, the standards of the country where manufactured, if approved by the Administrator

(c) Appropriate types and quantities are available.

(d) Proper storage and protection is used.

(3) Fuel/oil storage and dispensing facilities, if operated and maintained by operator. (See Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 8300.10, Airworthiness Inspector's Handbook, vol. 3, ch. 135.)

(4) Deicing chemical storage and dispensing equipment, if applicable, to ensure:

(a) Appropriate chemical storage and dispensing.

(b) Serviceability of equipment.

(c) Acceptable general condition and safety of storage areas.

(d) Appropriate identification of deicing/anti-icing fluid storage tanks, dispensing equipment, and transfer pumps and hoses.

(e) Training of personnel in operator's deicing procedures.

NOTE: If deicing services are provided on a contract basis, ensure that the contractor meets the above requirements.

(5) Support shops (avionics, sheet metal, engine, etc.), if applicable, to ensure:

(a) All required technical data is current and available.

(b) Staffing reflects complexity of the shop.

(c) Personnel are properly trained, qualified, and authorized. Training files may or may not be located at submaintenance facilities or line stations. When sampling training records, coordination with the facility that houses the training records may be warranted.

(d) Procedures for shift turnover are in place and properly used.

(e) All required special tooling and equipment is available, serviceable, and within calibration criteria.

(f) Maintenance tasks and inspection functions are being accomplished IAW the operator's maintenance manual.

(g) Safety equipment is available and serviceable.

(h) Individual shop storage areas are maintained to the same standards as the main storage area.

(i) Work areas do not conflict with each other, e.g., lathe is not next to avionics repair area.

(j) Lighting, ventilation, and general housekeeping are adequate.

NOTE: When applying this section to line maintenance facilities, the inspector must determine which items apply based on the complexity of the facility. Some line stations may not necessarily have a dedicated hangar.

(6) Hangar facilities, to ensure that:

(a) Facilities are adequate for the work being performed.

(b) Staffing reflects the complexity of work being performed.

(c) Personnel are properly trained, qualified, and authorized.

(d) Procedures for shift turnover are in place and properly used.

(e) Special equipment and tooling is available, serviceable, and calibrated, if applicable.

(f) Safety procedures are established and adhered to.

(g) Procedures direct the flow and control of all maintenance and inspection records.

(h) Lighting, ventilation, and general housekeeping are adequate.

(7) Hangar ground support equipment, to ensure the equipment is serviceable and appropriate for the work being performed.

E. Inspect the Operator's Technical Library. Ensure that all required technical data is available and current. If data is on microfiche, ensure that readers are available and serviceable. If the operator uses electronic publications, ensure that adequate procedures and controls exist for their generation and use (ref. AC 120-78). The data must include the following, as applicable:

- OpSpecs
- Operator's General Maintenance Manual
- Aircraft manufacturers' manuals
- Propeller, appliance, engine, and emergency equipment manufacturer's manuals
- Manufacturer's and vendor's service bulletins/letters
- Applicable federal aviation regulations
- Applicable Airworthiness Directives
- Applicable type certificate data sheets/Supplemental Type Certificates
- Aircraft flight manual (AFM)

F. Inspect the Aircraft Maintenance Record System. See Order 8300.10, vol. 3, ch. 42. Different operators maintenance facilities may or may not retain maintenance records at their location. Ensure the carrier has an adequate process for the transferring of maintenance records from submaintenance/line stations to facilities where records will be retained. If possible, sample the transfer process to ensure proper adherence to those procedures.

NOTE: Randomly sample a representative number of open and completed work packages to ensure the effectiveness of the system.

G. Inspect Aircraft. Inspect any available aircraft to determine the quality of maintenance being performed. (Refer to Order 8300.10 vol. 3, ch. 1, 2, and 3.)

H. Analyze Findings. Upon completion of inspection, record all deficiencies noted and determine the appropriate corrective action(s) to be taken.

7. TASK OUTCOMES.

A. Complete PTRS.

B. Complete the Task. Completion of this task may result in the following:

- Letter to the operator confirming results of the inspection
- EIRs, as necessary

C. Document the Task. File all supporting paperwork in the operator's office file.

9. FUTURE ACTIVITIES. If deficiencies are noted during surveillance, schedule a followup inspection.